

Internship Report on Working Experience at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.





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Ms. Humaira Naznin,

Senior Lecturer,

BRAC Business School,

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Subject: Report on general day to day activities during internship.

Dear Miss,

It is my immense pleasure to submit to you my internship report through which I have presented my overall day to day work experience during my internship period with the merchandising department at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.

It has been a great experience for me as I got the chance to work at this globally renowned company as well as while preparing this report for you. Through this report, I have tried to reflect my overall day to day work experiences and other related issues as per your requirements. I have discussed about the company overview, the merchandising department of UBL, my activities as an intern and my overall observation at UBL. I earnestly hope that, the report will fulfill your demands and expectations.

Yours Sincerely,

Saima Farhana,

ID: 12104073,

BRAC Business School,

BRAC University.

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I am grateful to the Almighty for giving me this opportunity and at the same time, I want to express my utmost gratitude to my academic supervisor Ms. Humaira Naznin Miss for giving me proper guidance and directions while preparing this report, without her kind helps this would have been a total failure.

I am also grateful to my line manager of merchandising department at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd., Mr. Bayejidul Haque and Assistant Merchandising Manager Ms. Sabera Haque, who provided me with all the necessary information that I required. In every phase, from topic selection to data collection and analysis, they have helped me a lot.

I am also very much thankful to my fellow colleagues of Unilever Bangladesh Limited who have been very supportive and gave me their valuable time and enough information to successfully make this report.

Last but not the least; I want to thank my family and friends, especially Ahmed Ahnaf for his time and support in completing this report as a fruitful one.

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Executive Summary

Unilever- a British-Dutch based company is one of the oldest and most renowned multinational companies in the world. It is the third largest consumer goods company owning over 400 brands available in around 190 countries in the world. Unilever Bangladesh Ltd., being a subsidiary of the Unilever in Bangladesh has also become one of the leading multinational business firms in the world of FMCG industry. Over the years the company has been growing by bringing world class innovative products to the people of Bangladesh. More than 90% of country's households use one or more of Unilever products like- Lux, Sunsilk, Surf-Excel, Vim, Dove, Knorr etc.

To make the brands more popular and to make the products more visible to the consumers, the Merchandising department of UBL, which is a core part of CD (Customer Development), has been working restlessly over the years. I was lucky enough to work such closely in this department and experience real life business issues and challenges which have really widen my knowledge and sights.

I have prepared this report into four major chapters. Firstly, I discussed about the background and origin of the report. The second chapter describes about the history, product offerings, vision and other key factors related to the company in general. The next chapter focuses on UBL's merchandising department and their way of doing business in the company. Then, the fourth chapter is about the overall responsibilities I had and experiences I got while doing my internship in the merchandising department of UBL. Later on, I have also added some recommendations based on my observations during my internship period at UBL.

Chapter 1: Introduction

It is literally impossible to find a person in Bangladesh who does not know about Lux, Lifebuoy or Sunsilk shampoo. From the people from rural zones to the urban areas, everyone recognizes these products. May be they do not know very well about the company that has been producing these amazing products over the years but they definitely like to use these. Well, the innovator and producer of these revolutionary products is the globally recognized company- Unilever.

Unilever- a British-Dutch based company is one of the oldest and most renowned multinational companies in the world. It is the third largest consumer goods company owning over 400 brands available in around 190 countries in the world. Unilever Bangladesh Ltd., being a subsidiary of the Unilever in Bangladesh has also become one of the leading multinational business firms in the world of FMCG industry. To maintain the quality and to make the brands more popular among the consumers the employees of UBL works hard and takes those projects that will best suit the company. They analyze the markets properly, tries to forecast the scenario in advance, takes proper steps, makes arrangements and does business as pre-planned. Each and every department has specific responsibilities to perform but the overall objective is the same- achieve the company's ultimate goals by providing the consumers with innovative and healthy products that will add vitality and will ensure a sustainable environment for all.

1.1 Origin of the Report

This report has been prepared to fulfill the requirements of the Internship program of BRAC Business School, BRAC University. I have done my internship in the merchandising department at Unilever Bangladesh Ltd. for almost two and a half months. During this period, I got to experience the real life business issues and got to know how an organization deals with these. I worked under Mr. Bayejidul Haque (MM) and Ms. Sabera Haque (AMM) at UBL and my internship supervisor is Ms. Humaira Naznin.

1.2 Objective of the Report

The main objectives of preparing this report is to-

- Present my overall internship experience at UBL,
- Relate academic learning with the real life business world,
- Learn how to adapt with new culture and people with diverse skills and backgrounds.

1.3 Scope of Study

This report will help to know about UBL's overall company overview, the merchandising department at UBL and the duties and responsibilities that I had while working as an intern there. The report does not contain any confidential or controversial internal information of the organization.

1.4 Methodology

- **Primary:** For primary data collection, I took interview of my line manager Mr. Bayejidul Haque and the AMM- Ms. Sabera Haque. The other interns who were working with me there also helped me a lot.
- **Secondary:** For secondary data collection I went through UBL's website, official Facebook page, previous internship reports and available articles on the internet. Basically, I did a qualitative research and used my overall observational aspects while preparing this report.

1.5 Limitation

There were some limitations that I faced while collecting information and putting those in my internship report. Firstly, the confidentiality of the merchandising department did not allow me to add some key information in this report. On the other hand, as the organization is very much formal and everyone is very busy all the time, it was hard to take interviews and collect proper and enough information in time.

Chapter 2: Overview of the Company

2.1 Unilever Global:

Unilever is a British-Dutch based company, with a history of colonial exploitation, on which it has gradually built its capital. Today it owns more than 400 of the world's consumer product brands in food, beverages, cleaning agents and personal care products. Unilever employs more than 174,000 people and had worldwide revenue of €49.800 billion in 2013. Unilever has two parent companies: Unilever NV in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and Unilever PLC in London, United Kingdom. Both Unilever companies have the same directors and effectively operate as a single business. The current non-executive Chairman of Unilever N.V. and PLC is Michael Treschow (May 2007) while Paul Polman (January 2009) is Chief Executive Officer. The net income in 2014 was €5.515 billion and the total number of employees in 2015 is 172,000. Unilever's major competitors include Nestlé and Procter & Gamble.

2.2 History of Unilever:

William Hesketh Lever founded Lever Brothers in 1885. Lever established soap factories around the world. In 1917, he began to diversify into foods, acquiring fish, ice cream and canned foods businesses. In the Thirties, Unilever introduced improved technology to the business. The business grew and new ventures were launched in Latin America. The entrepreneurial spirit of the founders and their caring approach to their employees and their communities remain at the heart of Unilever's business today.

Unilever was formed in 1930 when the Dutch margarine company Margarine Unie merged with British soap maker Lever Brothers. Companies were competing for the same raw materials, both were involved in large-scale marketing of household products and both used similar distribution channels. Between them, they had operations in over 40 countries. Margarine Unie grew through mergers with other margarine companies in the 1920s.

In a history that now crosses three centuries, Unilever's success has been influenced by the major events of the day –economic boom, depression, world wars, changing consumer lifestyles and advances in technology. And throughout they've created products that help people get more out of life—cutting the time spent on household chores, improving nutrition, enabling people to enjoy food and take care of their homes, their clothes and themselves. Through this timeline you'll see

how UBL brand portfolio has evolved. At the beginning of the 21st century, path to Growth strategy focused us on global high-potential brands and Vitality mission is taking us into a new phase of development. More than ever, how brands are helping people 'feel good, look good and get more out of life' – a sentiment close to Lord Lever Hulme's heart over a hundred years ago.

2.3 Timeline

19th century: Although Unilever wasn't formed until 1930, the companies that joined forces to create the business we know today were already well established before the start of the 20th century.

1900s: Unilever's founding companies produced products made of oils and fats, principally soap and margarine. At the beginning of the 20th century their expansion nearly outstrips the supply of raw materials.

1910s: Tough economic conditions and the First World War make trading difficult for everyone, so many businesses form trade associations to protect their shared interests.

1920s: With businesses expanding fast, companies set up negotiations intending to stop others producing the same types of products. But instead they agree to merge and so Unilever is created.

1930s: Unilever's first decade is no easy ride: it starts with the Great Depression and ends with the Second World War. But while the business rationalizes operations, it also continues to diversify.

1940s: Unilever's operations around the world begin to fragment, but the business continues to expand further into the foods market and increase investment in research and development.

1950s: Business booms as new technology and the European Economic Community lead to rising standards of living in the West, while new markets open up in emerging economies around the globe.

1960s: As the world economy expands so does Unilever and it sets about developing new products, entering new markets and running a highly ambitious acquisition program.

1970s: Hard economic conditions and high inflation make the 70s a tough time for everyone, but things are particularly difficult in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector as the big retailers start to flex their muscles.

1980s: The business expands into Central and Eastern Europe and further sharpens its focus on fewer product categories, leading to the sale or withdrawal of two-thirds of its brands.

1990s: The business expands into Central and Eastern Europe and further sharpens its focus on fewer product categories, leading to the sale or withdrawal of two thirds of its brands.

The 21st Centuries: The decade starts with the launch of Path to Growth, a five-year strategic plan, and in 2004 further sharpens its focus on the needs of 21st Century consumers with its Vitality mission.

2.4 Unilever Logo Design and History:

In 2005, Unilever decided to change their logo to represent their new theme of vitality. The new logo was also planned to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the company. The new logo tells the story of Unilever and vitality. It brings together 24 different icons representing Unilever and its brands, the idea of vitality and the benefits Unilever brings to consumers.



The icons are represented below:



Sun: The primary natural resource. All life begins with the sun, the ultimate symbol of vitality. It evokes Unilever's origin in part of sunlight & can represent a number of Unilever brands.



DNA: The double helix. The generic blueprint of life and a symbol of bioscience, it is a key to healthy life. The sun is the biggest ingredient of life and DNA is the smallest.



Bee: Represent creation, pollination, hard work and biodiversity. Bees symbolize both environmental challenges and opportunities.



Hand: A symbol of sensitivity, care and need. It represents both skin and touch.



Flower: Represents fragrance, when seen with the hand, it represents moisturizing cream.



Hair: A symbol of beauty and looking good. Placed next to the flower, it evokes cleanliness and fragrances, placed near the hand- it suggests softness.



Palm tree: A natural resource, it produces palm oil as well as many fruits. Coconut and dates are also symbolize paralyze.



Spoon: A symbol of nutrition, tasting and cooking.



Bowl: A bowl of delicious smelling food. It can also represent a ready meal, hot drinks or soup.



Spice & Flavors: Represent chili or fresh ingredients.



Fish: Represents food, sea or fresh water.



Sparkle: clean, healthy and sparking with energy.



Bird: a symbol of freedom. It suggests relief from daily chores, getting more out of life.



Recycle: Part of commitment to sustainability.



Lips: Represent beauty, looking good & taste.



Particles: A reference to science bubbles and fizz.



Ice-cream: a treat, pleasure or enjoyment.



Frozen: The plant is a symbol of freshness, the snowflake represents freezing, a transformational symbol.



Tea: A plant or an extract of a plant, such as tea, also a symbol of growing and farming.



Wave: Symbolizes cleanliness, freshness and vigorous icon. (With the clothes icon)



Sauce or spread: Represents mixing of stirring. It suggests blending in flavors and adding taste.



Heart: a symbol of love, care and health.



Clothes: Represent fresh laundry and looking good.



Container: Symbolizes packaging-a pot of cream associated with personal care.



Liquid: A reference to clean water and purity.

2.5 UNILEVER BANGLADESH LIMITED

2.5.1 The history

Unilever Bangladesh Ltd. is one of the world's most successful fast moving consumer goods manufacturing companies with local manufacturing facilities, reporting to regional business groups for innovation and business results.

Lever Brothers Bangladesh Ltd. as a subsidiary of Unilever is leading the home care, personal care and food product market of Bangladesh. On 25th February 1964 the eastern plant of Lever Brothers Pakistan Ltd. was inaugurated at Kalurghat, Chittagong with a soap production capacity of approximately 485 metric tons. It was a private limited company with 55% share held by Unilever and the rest by the Government of Pakistan. After independence the eastern plant was declared abandoned. But on 5th July 1973 it was registered under the name of Lever Brothers Bangladesh Ltd. as a joint venture company of Unilever PLC and the Govt. of Bangladesh with a share arrangement of 60.75% to Unilever and 39.25% to the Bangladesh Govt.

2.5.2 Unilever today

Unilever brands are trusted everywhere and, by listening to the people who buy them, they've grown into one of the world's most successful consumer goods companies. In fact, 150 million times a day, someone somewhere chooses a Unilever product. UBL is the market leader in 7 of the 8 categories it operates in, with 20 brands spanning across Home Care, Personal Care and Foods.

UBL have a portfolio of brands that are popular across the globe - as well as regional products and local varieties of famous-name goods. This diversity comes from two of their key strengths:

- Strong roots in local markets and first-hand knowledge of the local culture.
- World class business expertise applied internationally to serve consumers everywhere.

2.6 UBL AT A GLANCE

Type of business: Fast Moving Consumer Goods Company with local manufacturing facilities, reporting to regional business groups for innovation and business results.

Operations: Home and Personal Care, Foods, Water Purifier.

Constitution: Unilever - 60.75% shares, Government of Bangladesh - 39.25%

Product Categories: Household Care, Fabric Cleaning, Skin Cleansing, Skin Care, Oral Care, Hair Care, Personal Grooming, Tea based Beverages.

Brands: Wheel, Lux, Lifebuoy, Fair & Lovely, Pond's, Close Up, Sunsilk, Taaza, Pepsodent, Clear, Vim, Surf Excel, Rexona, Dove, Vaseline, TRESemme, Knorr.

Manufacturing Facilities: The Company has a Soap Manufacturing factory and a Personal Products Factory located in Chittagong. Besides these, there is a tea packaging operation in Chittagong and three manufacturing units in Dhaka, which are owned and run by third parties exclusively dedicated to Unilever Bangladesh.

Employees: Unilever Operations in Bangladesh provide employment to over 10,000 people directly and through its dedicated suppliers, distributors and service providers. 99.5% of UBL employees are locals and they have equal number of Bangladeshis working abroad in other Unilever companies as they expatriates.

The employees are recognized there by staying connected and growing while the company is growing at the same time.

2.7 MISSION

Unilever's mission is to add Vitality to life; to meet everyday needs for nutrition; hygiene and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life.

Unilever recognizes growing consumer needs for-

- a healthy lifestyle,
- more variety, quality, taste and enjoyment,
- time, as an increasingly precious commodity,
- helping people to feel good, look good and get more out of life will enable us to meet these needs and expand our business.

2.8 CORPORATE VISION

To make cleanliness a commonplace; to lessen work for women; to foster health and contribute to personal attractiveness, in order that life may be more enjoyable and rewarding for the people who use the products.

- Sustainable Living: One of the key aspects of UBL's vision is to make sustainable living a commonplace. They are developing new business practices that grow both the company and the communities. They are meeting people's ever-increasing desire for more sustainable products and creating a brighter future for everyone. The Unilever Sustainable Living Plan will help the company to double the size of the business while reducing the environmental footprint and increasing the positive social impact. And the company is working in partnerships where they can help change things on a global scale:

deforestation and climate change; water, sanitation and hygiene; and sustainable agriculture and smallholder farmers.

2.9 UNILEVER BRANDS AND PRODUCT OFFERINGS:

Unilever has a portfolio of about 400 brands globally. Worldwide, the products can be categorized into four sectors:

- 1) Food and Drink,
- 2) Home Care,
- 3) Personal Care,
- 4) Water Purifier.

However, many of these are local that can only be found in certain countries, e.g. Fair & Lovely. In Bangladesh the number of UBL's existing brands is 22, which are categorized in different sections.

Category	Product
Fabric Wash	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Wheel Laundry Soap➤ Wheel Washing Powder➤ Wheel Power White➤ Surf Excel
Household Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Vim Powder➤ Vim Bar➤ Vim Liquid
Personal Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ International Lux➤ Lifebuoy Total➤ Dove bar➤ Lifebuoy Liquid soap
Water Purifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Pureit

Skin Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fair & Lovely Multivitamins ➤ Fair & Lovely Body Fairness Milk ➤ Fair & Lovely Ayurvedic ➤ Fair & Lovely Menz Active ➤ Pond's Age Miracle range ➤ Pond's Daily Face Wash range ➤ Pond's Cold Cream ➤ Pond's Perfect result Cream ➤ Ponds Dream Flower Talc ➤ Pond's flawless white range ➤ Pond's White Beauty Range ➤ Pond's Body Lotion ➤ Lakme skin care products ➤ Dove skin care products ➤ Vaseline skin care products
Hair Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sun Silk Shampoo ➤ All Clear Shampoo ➤ Lifebuoy Shampoo ➤ Dove shampoo ➤ All Clear Hair Oil ➤ TRESemme Shampoo
Oral Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Close-up Toothpaste ➤ Pepsodent Toothpaste ➤ Pepsodent Toothpowder ➤ Pepsodent Tooth brush
Deodorant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rexona ➤ Axe
Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lipton Taaza Danadar and Strong, ➤ Knorr Noodles and Knorr Soup.

In Bangladesh, Unilever's strengths come from:

- Its presence in several product categories
- Various brands
- Numerous variants and pack size
- Wide ranging options to fulfill diverse aspirations and taste
- Tailoring products to satisfy consumers with different needs and means
- Covering the country by hundreds of thousands of outlets
- This wide range of products and brands offered by UBL shows the realization of the simple universal fact – *“different individuals have different needs”*.

2.10 STRATEGIES FOLLOWED BY THE COMPANY

2.10.1 Functional Level Strategies:

Unilever Bangladesh Ltd follows different functional level strategies to gain competitive advantages and sustain it in the long run in the matured industries.

- The Company increases their efficiency through exploiting economies of scale and learning effects. For example, 808,720 bars of soaps, 1,023,810 packets of detergent powders, 154, 430 toothpaste tubes and sachets, 329, 530 bottles and sachets of shampoo, 156, 910 tubes, jars, bottles and sachets of creams and lotions, and 35, 000 packets of tea are produced in one day in Bangladesh by Unilever.
- They adopt flexible manufacturing technologies, upgrade the skills of employees through training and perform research and development function to design products that are easy to manufacture.
- They have higher customer responsiveness rate. They carry out extensive research to make innovative and new products and modify the existing products to better satisfy the consumers.
- They continuously research on product development, promotional activities, packaging and distribution. This way they can respond quickly to customer demands.

2.10.2 Business-Level Strategies:

Unilever's strategic managers adopt different business level strategies to use the company's resources and distinctive competencies to gain competitive advantage over its rivals. These are:

- They follow cost-leadership strategy as they have intermittent over capacity and the ability to gain economies of scale. This way they can produce cost effective products and yet be profitable.
- They also follow differentiation strategy for some products to meet the needs of the consumers in a unique way.
- They also target different market segments with different products to have broad product line. By product proliferation they reduce the threat of entry and expand the range of products they make to fill a wide variety of niches.

2.10.3 Strategy in the Global Environment:

Unilever Bangladesh Ltd. is registered under Unilever. As a part of a global company it follows some generalized strategies and principals of Unilever. However, they also modify different strategies based on the national conditions. The different strategies that they follow in the global environment are stated below:

- As a worldwide famous company and comprising internationally renowned brands gives them unique strengths that allow a company to achieve superior efficiency, quality, innovation, or customer responsiveness. The different policies and strategies Unilever follows and their experience is transferred to Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.
- They import the raw materials from the places where it is less costly, thus achieve location economy.
- They are locally responsive. They are always ready to improve and modify their products to meet the needs of the local customers.
- UBL follows a multi domestic strategy where the companies extensively customize both their product offering and marketing strategy to different national conditions.

2.10.4 Corporate strategy:

UBL carries out the following corporate level strategies:

- They involve in short term contracts and competitive bidding for the supply of raw materials.
- They have a diversified business. UBL has both related and unrelated diversification.
- They compete in nine different industries with various products from home care, personal care and even food products. They have economies of scope as most of the products can share the same manufacturing facilities, inputs and specially the distribution channels.

2.11 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

In terms of Unilever, they have two chairmen leading the company worldwide. They have seven top directors leading seven different departments. They have divided their worldwide business into different region and have different business groups to manage them.

Unilever Bangladesh limited falls under the Southeast Asian region. On a more micro scale, Unilever Bangladesh Ltd is monitored by Hindustan lever Ltd. which oversees operation in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Srilanka. The chairman of Unilever Bangladesh Limited is known as the managing director. The management staff of the company consists of six layers, starting from junior manager (who are local managers) to manager grade 5 (who are Unilever managers). Apart from this the company also hires many non management staff as well as operatives to work in the factories.

Unilever Bangladesh Limited structured in the following manner:

Unilever Bangladesh Limited has five departments to carry out all the organizational functions. Respective director's head are head of all departments. These departments are:

1. Customer Development Department Headed by Customer Development Director (CDD),
2. Brands Development Department headed by the Brands and Development Director (B&DD),
3. Supply Chain Department headed by the Supply Chain Director (SCD),
4. Finance Department headed by Finance Director (FD),

5. Human Resources Department headed by the Human Resources Director (HRD).

2.12 UNILEVER's CONTRIBUTION

Unilever Making a positive contribution to society through their brands, the commercial operations and relationships, their voluntary contributions to the community and through their wider engagement with Bangladeshi society. 72% of the company's value addition is distributed to the Government of Bangladesh. UBL operations provide employment to over 10000 people.

2.12.1 Doing Well by Doing Good

Unilever believes in ambitious growth of the business while fostering a sustainable environment. We believe the two must be related and hence sustainability is placed at the heart of everything we do. Our philosophy of 'Doing Well by Doing Good' is captured in the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan (USLP).

Some of the initiatives under USLP in Bangladesh are:

- Lifebuoy Lifesaver Program – a Lifebuoy initiative to reduce child mortality through hand washing with soap.
- Oral Health & Hygiene Awareness Program– led by Pepsodent, this school-based activation program aims to reach 7 million people with its dental checkups and oral hygiene awareness.
- Lifebuoy Friendship Hospital - launched in March 2002 in association with the humanitarian organization "Friendship", the hospital is situated on a boat with a dedicated medical team and reaches out to people who do not have access to proper medical facilities.
- Pureit - launched in 2010, Pureit is a water purifier which aims to provide safe drinking water to 2.5 million people by 2015.
- Pollydut - through this project unemployed youth in villages have been incorporated into our distribution network to provide them with a sustainable livelihood.

- Project Laser Beam (PLB) – PLB, a multi-million dollar, multi-stakeholder project between Unilever Foundation and WFP, was conducted in Shatkira, Bangladesh from 2010 to 2014. The project worked across four pillars – Nutrition, Water, Health and Hygiene, and Livelihood, to develop a holistic model to eradicate malnutrition.
- Tackling Malnutrition – 2 projects with Save the Children addressing child malnutrition have programs running in 4 divisions of the country. These projects are aimed at aiding the Government improve their malnutrition treatment infrastructure and provide direct interventions for effected individuals in terms of nutrition education and livelihood.

2.12.2 Unilever’s Social Responsibility

- Eco-efficiency – Unilever Bangladesh Limited always tries to reduce the impacts of company operations by efficient manufacturing equipments and proper waste management system.
- Eco-innovation – Unilever Bangladesh Limited also aim to mitigate the impacts of Unilever Bangladesh Limited products by using recyclable packages and safe ingredients.
- Sustainability programs in fish, agriculture and water.
- Unilever Bangladesh Limited Code of Business Principles.
- Fair Business Practice.
- Supporting local communities.

Chapter 3: Job Responsibilities

3.1 What is Merchandising?

In the broadest sense, merchandising is any practice which contributes to the sale of products to a retail consumer. At a retail in-store level, merchandising refers to the variety of products available for sale and the display of those products in such a way that it stimulates interest and entices customers to make a purchase.

In retail commerce, visual display merchandising means merchandise sales using product design, selection, packaging, pricing, and display that stimulates consumers to spend more. This includes disciplines and discounting, physical presentation of products and displays, and the decisions about which products should be presented to which customers at what time.

Merchandising helps to understand the ordinary dating notation for the terms of payment of an invoice. It solves pricing problems including markups and markdowns. It helps to find the net price of an item after single or multiple trade discounts and can calculate a single discount rate that is equivalent to a series of multiple discounts. Further it helps to calculate the amount of cash discount for which a payment qualifies.

3.2 Merchandising at UBL

In Unilever, merchandising is a core part of the CD department. These two teams work together closely to bring out the best outputs. Here, merchandising is considered as-

- An activity designed to increase customer's visibility,
- Movement of products from the store to the shopper's shopping basket,
- An extension of advertising and an aid to selling,
- The art of displaying products,
- A motivational factor that initiates a customer to buy a product at the point-of-sale,
- The last punch which makes the difference between winning or losing a shopper /consumer,
- An effective tool to reach out to the millions having no access to mass media.

3.3 Organogram of CD (including Merchandising):

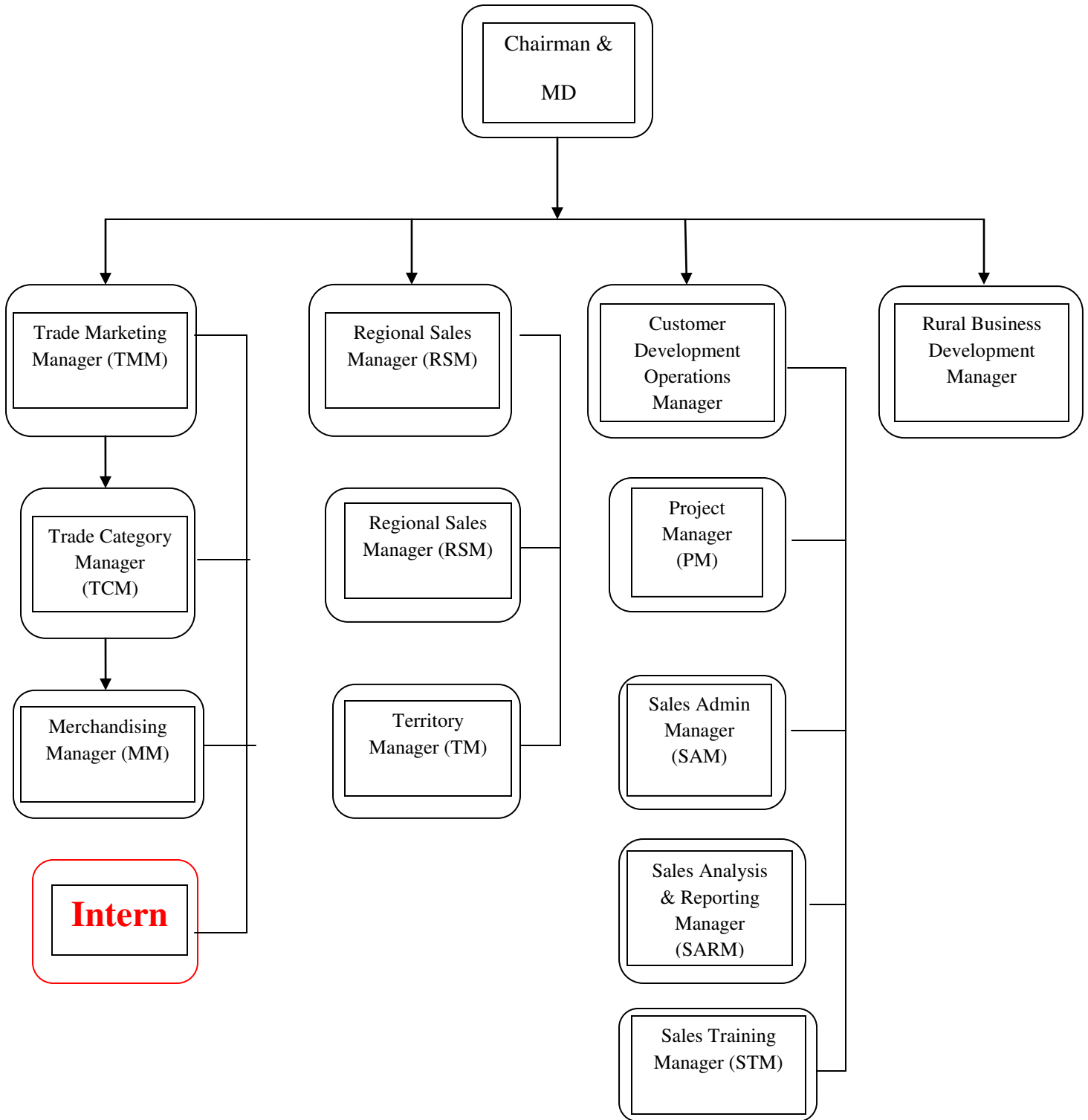
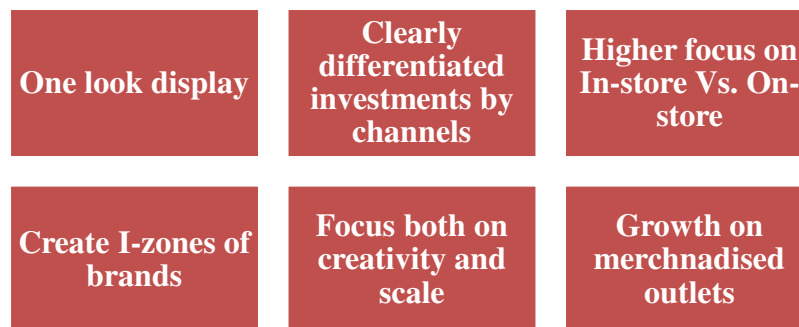


Fig: Organogram of CD Department (including Merchandising)

3.4 Process of Merchandising:

In UBL, the whole market of Bangladesh is divided into seven regions. These are: Dhaka Metro, Dhaka Outer, Chittagong, Bogra, Khulna, Rajshahi, Sylhet. At the very beginning of the year, brand managers and other associates and merchandising personnel along with the head of the CD department sit for several meetings to plan, discuss and make strategies for the entire year's merchandising initiatives. These proposals are evaluated over and over again and examined at various levels for the maximum outputs. Throughout the whole year according to the market demand and situations, many other merchandising proposals and orders are given, taken and even changed. The employees of the merchandising department work restlessly to bring out the best outputs. Most of the time, the production is done through external vendors and agencies. For example: Fahim AD, Images, Azad Art Hall, Step Media Ltd and so on. These agencies are very efficient and trustworthy. On the other hand, UBL has CM (Contract Merchandiser) at every region who are properly trained by the MM and are responsible to carry out the duties appointed upon them by the company.

There are six POP principles in UBL. They are:



The merchandising work is divided into two parts in UBL – 1) Urban Bangladesh, 2) Rural Bangladesh and is also done differently for these two areas. Further, the urban and rural markets are also categorized into several merchandising channels.

3.5 Merchandising in Urban Bangladesh



Fig 1: Classification of merchandising channels at Urban Bangladesh



Wet Market Branding



Urban General Store Cluster Branding



Shopping Mall Branding

3.6 Merchandising in Rural Bangladesh

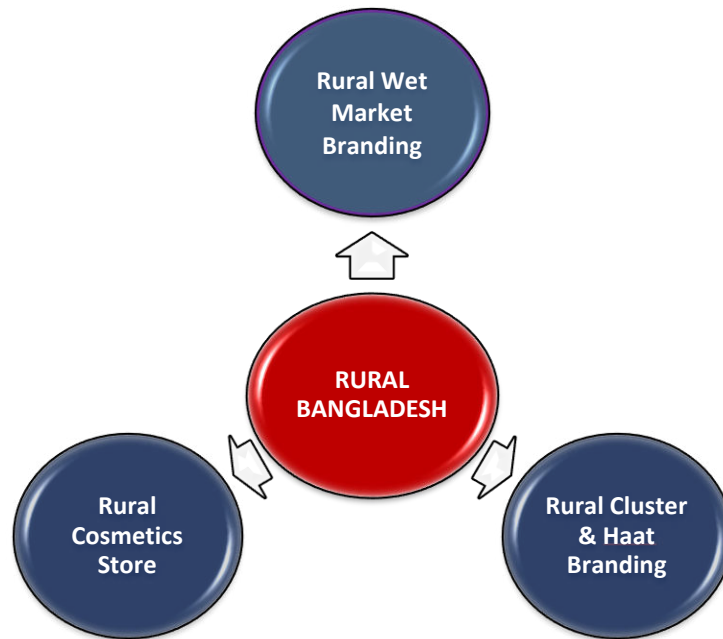


Fig 2: Classification of merchandising channels at Rural Bangladesh



Rural Wet Market Branding



Rural Cluster and Haat Branding



Mini LED TV in Rural Cosmetics Store

3.7 Supporting Activities

To make the brands stand out from the clutter in stores the merchandising department is driving various innovative POS Materials. Along with that, to support launch & re- launches, they also provide relative POSMs to support the overall business.

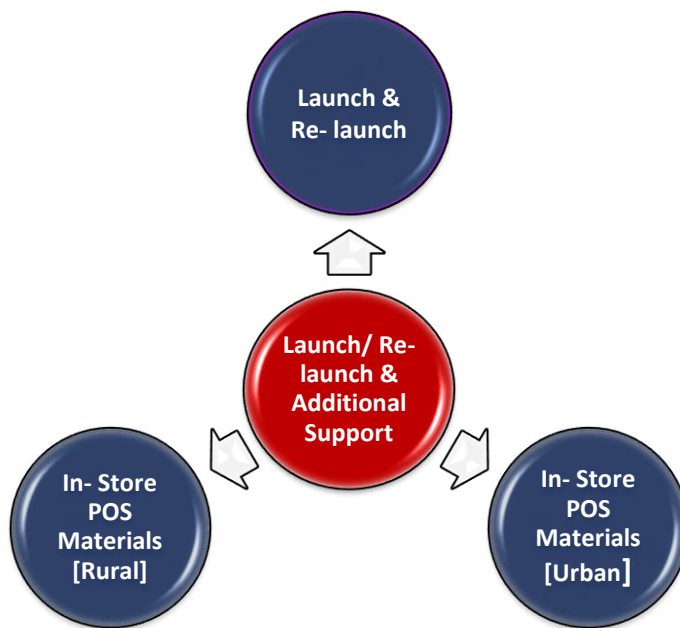


Fig 3: Supporting activities of Merchandising Department

3.8 Some examples of UBL's POSM:

Name of the POSM Item	Picture
Branded outlet (Shop Board, Pillar, Shutter)	
Pump Hanger	
Pouch Hanger	
Mega Hanger	
Sachet Hanger	

3.9 Job Responsibilities in the Merchandising Department

As mentioned earlier, I worked as an intern under the merchandising department which is a core part of CD. I was not given any specific project to work on rather I worked on their day to day activities. The key responsibilities are described below:

Preparing Presentation

1) Preparing Presentation: The very first task that I had to perform as an intern was to prepare presentation. My line manager went to China to experience different innovative merchandising ideas which I had to later reflect through my presentation. My manager provided all the supporting documents like: pictures and videos. There were five main parts that I had to include in every slide-

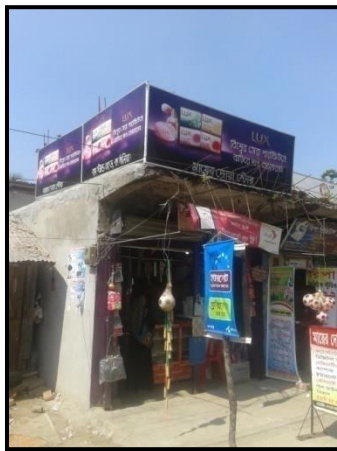
- **Picture/Video of the Item:** This was the most important element of the presentation as the main objective of the presentation was to showcase new and innovative merchandising ideas which, if applied in Bangladesh, can boost the business.
- **Channel:** The main objective of this point is to clearly mention which item will be most suitable for which channel. For example like, there are several products (LED touch screen, LED split screen) which are produced only for modern trades and are not at all suitable for UWMG or RCS. Thus, this point clearly notes down and makes everyone properly understand about the specific channels for different products.
- **Brand:** This point- “Brand” mainly notifies which product is most suitable to be merchandised by specific POSM items. Not every product can be merchandised by every POSM items. It depends on the cost and quality of the product. For example: Fabric backlit can be used to promote all the brands. On the other hand, PET Film is most suitable to promote brands like- POND’S White Beauty, Sunsilk.
- **Price:** It mentions the costing of each item that UBL will have to spend if they decide to purchase that specific item.
- **Objective:** This is also one of the main points which thoroughly describes about every item’s advantages and how it can add value to UBL’s merchandising. It points out every details and benefits of all the items.

The second presentation that I had to prepare was based on the POSM items from India. This one is pretty much similar to the China presentation. However, the only difference is that, this time, I had witnessed every product and could actually understand the worth of every product.

2) Translating English Presentation to Bangla: Here, I had to translate a presentation which was on “CM Training” from English to Bengali. There were forty-five slides in the presentation and I had to translate all of it.

Identifying Improvement areas in Shop Boards

Adding shop boards in UGS, UNG and in different shops of rural areas is a key task of merchandising. It is mainly done by different agencies. After every execution, the agency had to send CDs, putting all the pictures of all the boards that they have worked on. It is done to ensure accountability and find out whether there needs any further improvements or not. I checked almost six hundred photos and pointed out the errors.



Error: The shop board is placed too high and the walls and area under the board are not colored.



The shop board is placed perfectly and the walls, bamboos and other areas are colored properly.

Checking CM (Contract Merchandiser) Salary Claim Statement

CM salary statement checking was one of the routine tasks of my internship period. There are several factors to be considered while checking the statements. It is calculated monthly. There are some fixed amounts as well as variable amounts that vary as per towns and working days. Basic salary, TA (Travel Allowance), DA (Daily Allowance), HOPI, LOPI had to be calculated with the amount decided by UBL. I used to note down every miscalculation and after that would report that to the MM or ASM.

Compilation of Data in Excel

I worked on several compilation tasks:

Backlit database: As mentioned earlier, UBL provides merchandising items to the shops; it also bears all the costs associated with these. Thus, all the electricity and other bills are paid by UBL. The TM of every town sends the backlit bill amount quarterly as per the format given by the merchandising department. There were updates from total fifty-two towns and I had to compile and adjust all the data accordingly. On the other hand, I had to prepare data summary as well through pivot table.

Winter POSM: To promote winter products (Vaseline, POND'S Lotion) the merchandising department started work on it earlier. They provided POSM items like- In-shop Glossy Sticker, Street Block Poster, Roman Banner etc. All the executions were done through different agencies. These agencies continuously updated the merchandising department of their progress from total one twenty six towns. I used to put all the data into one single file and update it regularly.

Mini LED TV: To increase the dominance of promotion in the rural areas, UBL merchandising department undertook a very important project this year. They provided Mini LED TV to the selected rural cosmetics as well as urban cosmetics stores. The agencies used to send detailed information and I used to compile and calculate those into one single file.

Maintaining Communication with the Agencies

Taking updates from agencies: I used to take update from different agencies about their work progress, any trouble faced and other related issues. After taking all the updates, I used to report those to the MM or AMM.

Preparing Subtitle

Preparing Subtitles: I prepared subtitles for three advertisements of Fair & Lovely. Basically, I had to listen to every dialogue and had to prepare subtitles for it. The advertisements were on an average of two and a half minutes. I really enjoyed doing this task. As a token of appreciation I got a wonderful pen-drive also.

Preparing Memorandum and Agenda

Preparing agenda: In one meeting with a vendor from India, I noted down all the information provided by him. Later on, I had to prepare agenda on that meeting and a mail to confirm him about the POSM items liked by UBL. I used to prepare memorandum on different topics as well.

These were basically all my routine activities. Other than these, I had to receive every individual who came to MM or AMM as it is a mandatory part of the company guidelines.

Chapter 4: Recommendations & Conclusion

4.1 Recommendations

Though two and a half months are not fully enough to see and understand all the work processes of such big company like Unilever Bangladesh Ltd, I found some areas on which I would like to recommend some improvements-

- Firstly, the merchandising department is a very important part of CD and the work loads are very heavy there. It becomes very tough for only two individuals to handle all the pressures and workloads. Thus, I think the company should employ more staffs in this department.
- They should organize their meeting processes. I have seen people from different agencies and other companies are coming now and then there and sometimes they have to wait long since the MM and AMM can be busy doing other tasks or attending another meeting at that time. Moreover, it is distractive. So, they should allocate specific time periods for such meetings and let the agencies know about it earlier so that they can come at that time and finish it appropriately.
- The work life balance is very little at UBL. Many employees come very early in the morning and leaves quite late at night, around 9 pm even. So, maybe their hard work is good for the present but in the long run UBL may face lack of efficiency and productivity in its employees.
- The territory officers make several mistakes while preparing reports on CM salary statements and on other projects. So, I think they should arrange a formal meeting having every officer at least in every quarter a year so that everyone can be trained and be made clear about the required formats, updates and processes properly.
- After joining UBL as an intern, I did not get any formal orientation to learn about specific company rules and guidelines which made lots of problem for me. I was not introduced to anyone other than my line manager, thus I faced some trouble while working with other individuals there.
- The company puts the interns in those departments where it needs one. They do not consider the intern's major or minor, like I have done my major in finance and HRM but I was recruited in the merchandising department. Having little knowledge over

merchandising items or processes, I used to take more time than I normally need to understand every aspects of it. On the other hand, I have seen other interns complaining about it too that they had even lost interest to work more due to this reason.

4.2 Conclusion

To work such closely at this global MNC like Unilever Bangladesh Ltd. has been truly an amazing experience for me. I got to know so many new things and aspects of real business world that really boosted my knowledge and excellence. On the other hand, working in the merchandising department also gave me scopes to learn about totally new things as I had little knowledge about merchandising earlier.

Through this report I have presented my overall work experiences during my internship period at UBL. I have discussed about several aspects of merchandising and the way the company is doing business in the country. I am really pleased that I got the chance to do my internship at UBL which really increased my practical knowledge and have made my overall BBA program more complete and enriched.

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Appendix

- UBL: Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.
- CD Department: Customer Development Department
- MM: Merchandising Manager
- AMM: Assistant Merchandising Manager
- CM: Contract Merchandiser
- SKU: Stock Keeping Unit
- UGS: Urban General Store
- UNG: Urban Neighborhood Grocer
- UWMG: Urban Wet Market Grocer
- UCS: Urban Cosmetics Store
- RCS: Rural Cosmetics Store
- MT: Modern Trade
- POSM: Point of Sales Materials
- POPM: Point of Purchase Materials.